JUN 10 1959

Mr Blackmore

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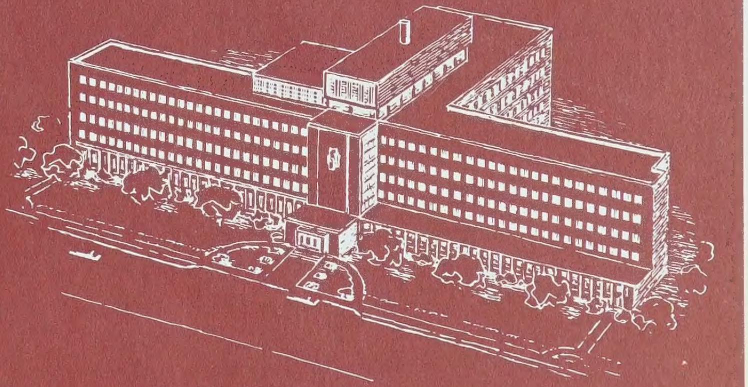


Building for the Future

"The Family" by Lionel Thomas of Vancouver. Bronze sculpture, sixteen feet in height, which adorns central exterior column above main entrance.

The Great-West Life Assurance

Company

60 Osborne St. North
WINNIPEG, CANADA

Our new building marks the end of an era and simultaneously heralds a new one. Its long-awaited completion is the culmination of years of planning and action. It is undoubtedly a most significant milestone in the sixty-seven year history of the Company. This is a time to remember, with respect and a real sense of obligation, the achievements of all the people who down through nearly seven decades have contributed to the stature and character of this Company.

Our new building is the creation of many minds, many skills, many hands. To all who have played a part in its planning and construction, we, who will work in it, would like to express our appreciation and thanks.

This new Head Office accurately reflects the size and scope of the trust imposed on us by our eight hundred thousand policyholders. It will enable us to serve them better and to fulfil increasingly well our responsibilities of stewardship and protection.

June 8, 1959.

President.

The story of the new Head Office building begins shortly after the Second World War. In 1946 the amount of life insurance and annuities owned by policyholders of the Great-West Life passed $1 billion. This was the achievement of fifty-four years of business but it was anticipated that the years immediately ahead would see a considerable increase in the rate of growth.

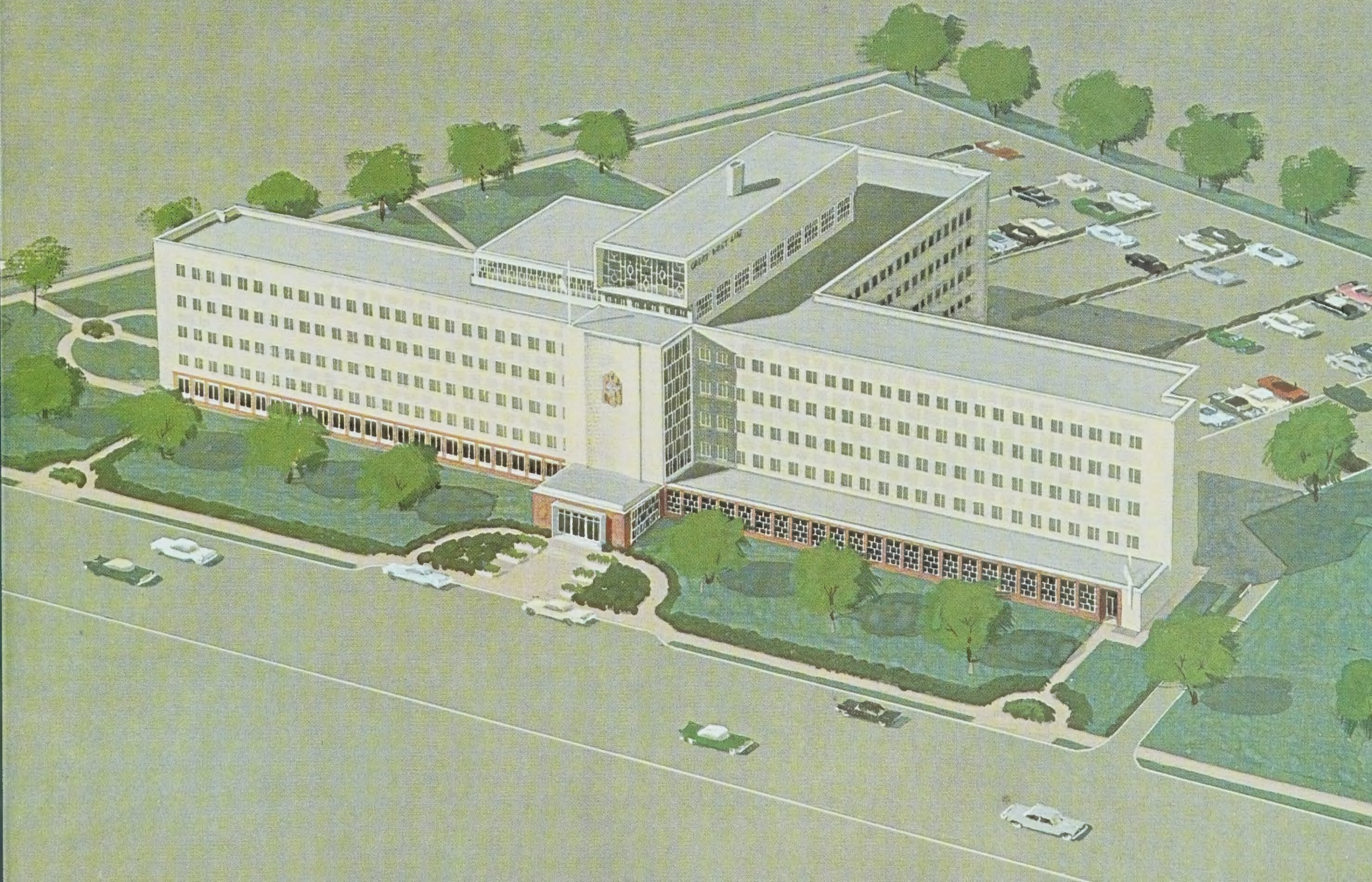
It was equally evident that this potential growth would render inadequate the Head Office building the Company had occupied since 1911. Restrictions on construction during the war had aggravated this problem; and, although the Company acquired an adjacent 13-storey building in 1946, this was recognized as only a stop-gap measure. It became increasingly apparent that a new Head Office, a building designed for a large-scale life insurance operation, was essential.

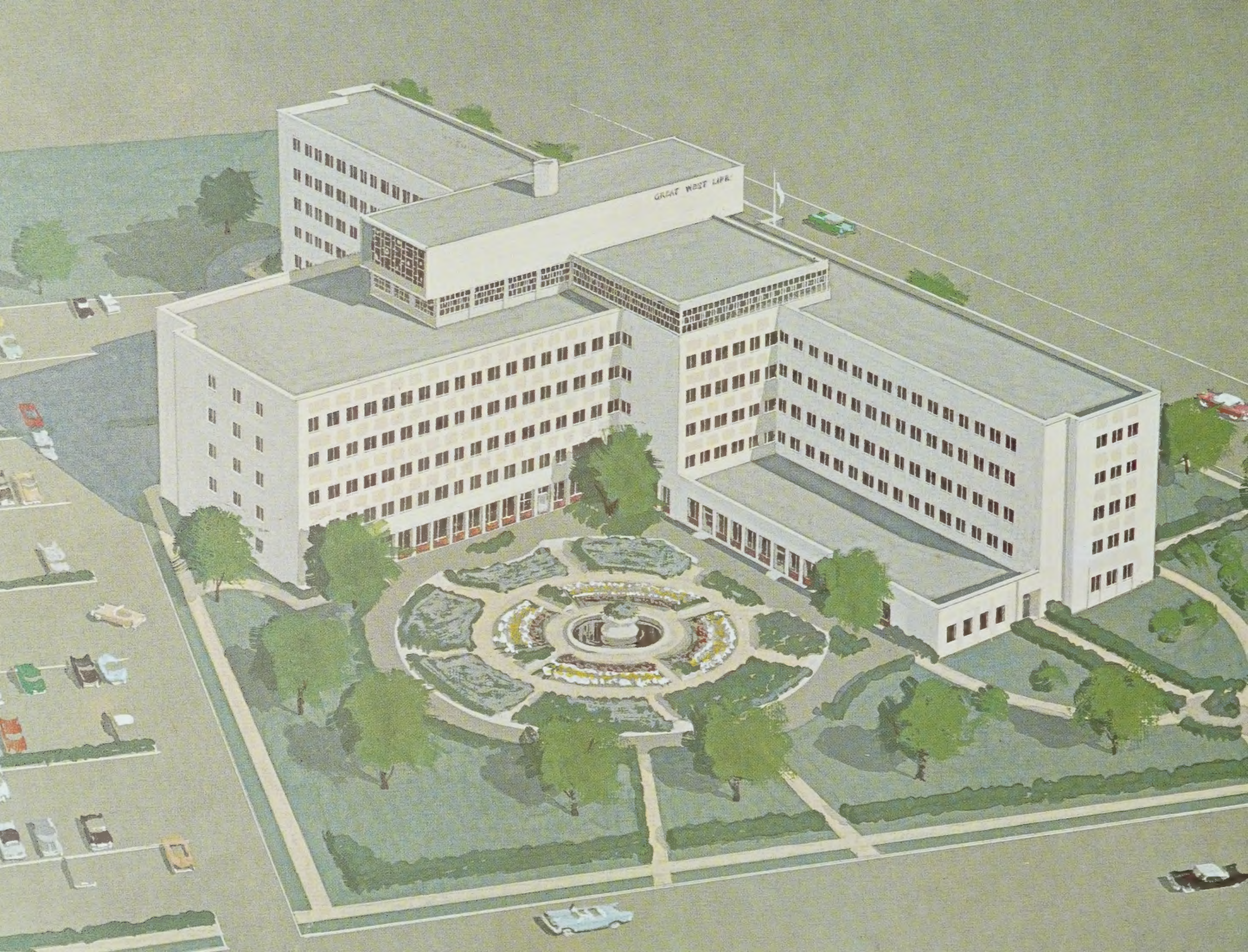
The first step was to weigh the possibilities of building on the present site: located in the heart of downtown Winnipeg, and now covering almost a city block, it had some advantages. However, study and the advice of outside consultants showed that such a reconstruction project on the limited property available was impracticable. The Company began looking at once for a new site, and simultaneously, made a detailed projection of expansion over the next few years to ascertain how long the present headquarters could be used. This projection pointed to mid-1959; at that time, it was estimated, the Head Office staff complement would overtake the capacity of the buildings to be vacated.

A number of suburban locations were investigated but transportation and other problems soon proved the advantages of a central site. The best location proved to be the property on Osborne Street North immediately to the West of the Manitoba Legislative Buildings—for many years the site of the old Amphitheatre Rink and Osborne Stadium. With the acquisition of some surrounding property, the site totalled about eight acres, ample for present and future needs.

Coincident with the search for a suitable property the Company had to consider the question of what kind of building it should construct. The most important requirement was for a functional Head Office, designed with the peculiar needs of a life insurance company in mind. Such a building must permit of virtually an assembly-line type of operation—there are very large clerical staffs to be considered; also logical "work flows" and interrelationship of departments to be allowed for. If related departments have not the space to work side by side, or at least on

Front view: showing 450-foot frontage on Osborne Street facing east towards Manitoba Legislative Building.




GREAT WEST LIFE

the same floor, a great deal of time is lost annually in extended lines of communication. The need in the new building was for wide open work areas.

At this stage the two firms who later became associated architects on the project—Marani & Morris of Toronto, and Moody, Moore & Partners of Winnipeg—were asked to submit designs for a Head Office which could accommodate up to sixteen hundred people. They had similar views on what was required and both suggested an expansive five-storey design, roughly in the shape of a horizontal "T". The most important reason for such a "long, low" design was the three large wings of open office space it made possible, and the linking of the three wings on each floor. The design achieved these open wings by concentrating all service facilities in the core of the building—mail rooms, transportation, washrooms and so forth. The "core design" also made it possible to locate air-conditioning and other bulky equipment in a "penthouse" on the top of the building.

Altogether, the design provided for 219,000 square feet of usable space—enough for the needs of Great-West Life for a number of years ahead. The architects' plans do, nevertheless, allow for future extension. When the need arises the building can be more than doubled in area by attaching another long block to the rear wing—turning the "T" into an "H". This extension could rise considerably higher than five storeys and bring the capacity of the building up to 4,000 people; a staff figure greater than any anticipated in the foreseeable future. Certain areas have been designed with future extension in view; for instance, the kitchen area of the staff cafeteria provides space for expansion, and the boiler room space could ultimately contain equipment capable of heating double the present floor area.

The question of what materials should be used in the building was next considered. Should it be of stone, brick, steel, aluminum, curtain wall, or some other material? An important factor here was the extremes of the Winnipeg weather which ranges from the nineties in mid-summer to a frigid below-zero norm during much of the winter. Stone proved the most suitable—basically Tyndall Stone, a limestone from Manitoba quarries which has been well tested in the local climate. Thus the structure emerged: it would have a limestone and granite façade, relieved by the extensive use of glass, and supported by a structural steel frame.

View from south-west showing West Wing, ornamental gardens, and parking area.

Main entrance foyer.

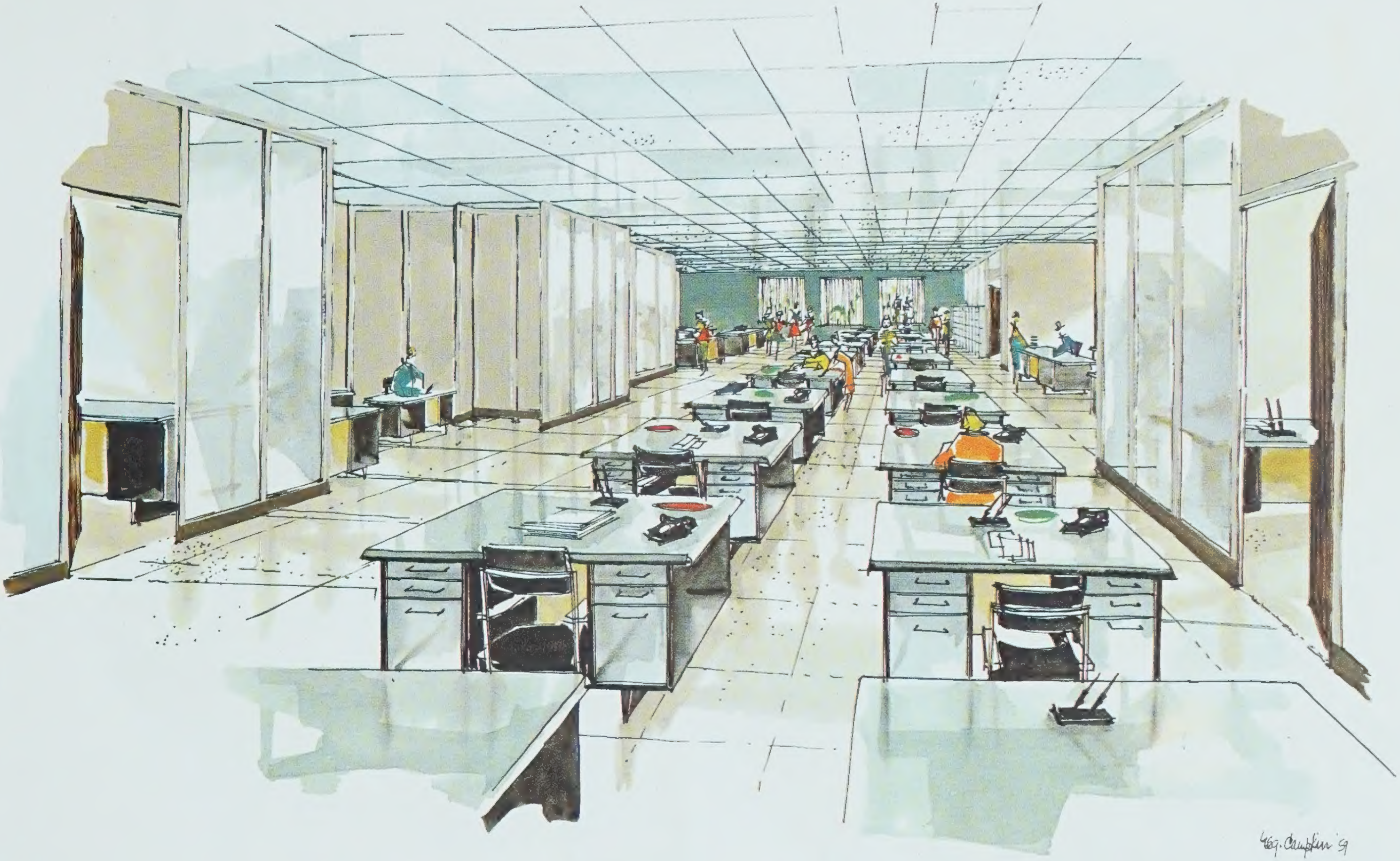
Detailed planning of the interior of the building was a team effort. At every level within the Company there was interest and cooperation in the task of designing a Head Office that would meet the need. Liaison with the architects, general contractor, and other outside specialists was maintained through a Head Office Building Committee, assisted by the Company's Planning department.

The economic need for a building which made the best use of space, and included the latest in time and cost-saving equipment, was combined with an important personnel factor—that staff performance improves with an improvement in working conditions. While realizing an effective use of space the building retained character and personal warmth—providing pleasant surroundings conducive to high staff morale which, in turn, stimulates top performance.

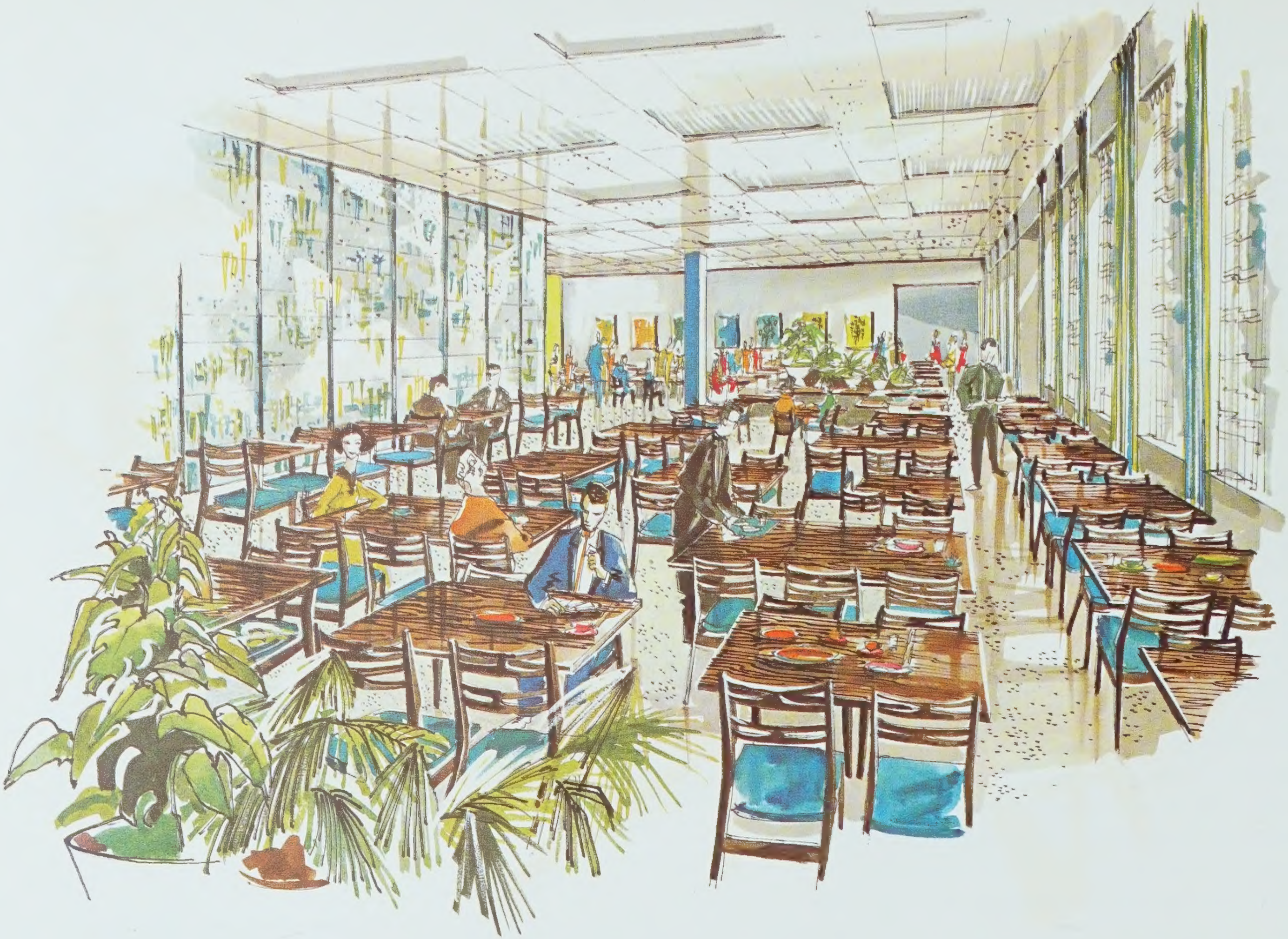
The three-wing plan, with a minimum use of interior columns, provides the large work areas that were desired. The two front wings (50 feet wide by 200 feet long) are completely free of columns; the rear wing, although 100 feet wide by 170 feet long, has only one row of columns. By making all walls flush, maintaining a uniform ceiling height, and substituting movable steel partitions for permanent walls in all but a few areas, a significant degree of flexibility was ''built into'' the Head Office.

Large departments—some have staffs numbering a hundred and more—can expand without being separated by corridors or walls. As the Company grows and requirements change, some departments will inevitably move to new locations in the building; with movable walls these areas can be adjusted or enlarged without a serious disruption of normal routines.

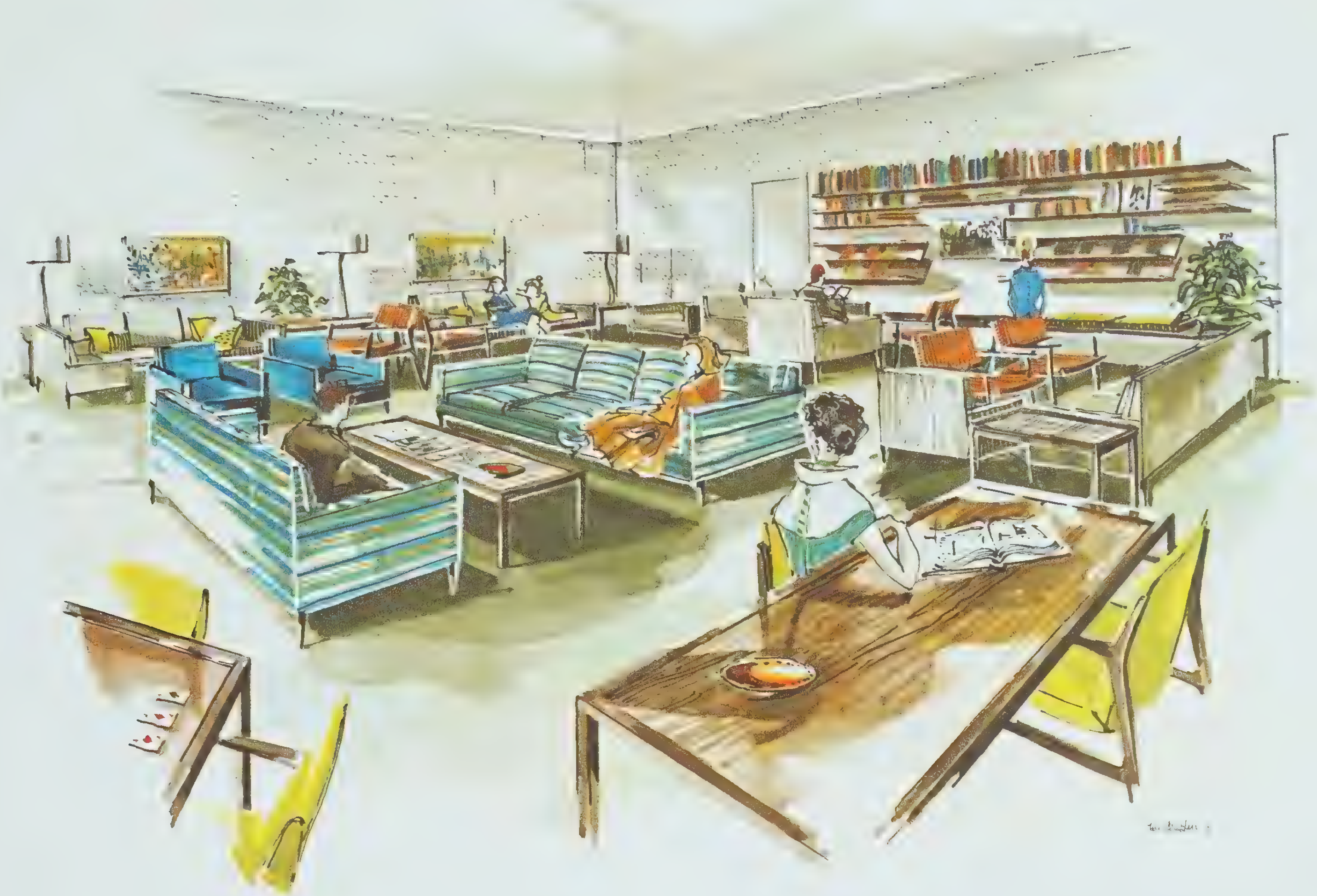
The new building enables the several divisions of the Company to be set up on a logical basis, combining functional



Typical column-free, well-lighted,
functional working area.



Staff cafeteria, West Wing, main floor. Capacity 375.
Overlooks ornamental garden



Staff lounge, South Wing, main floor, adjoins cafeteria at right angles and overlooks garden.

layouts (geared to the actual work done by departments and their relationship to other departments) with the needs of "organization"—the lines of responsibility within whole divisions.

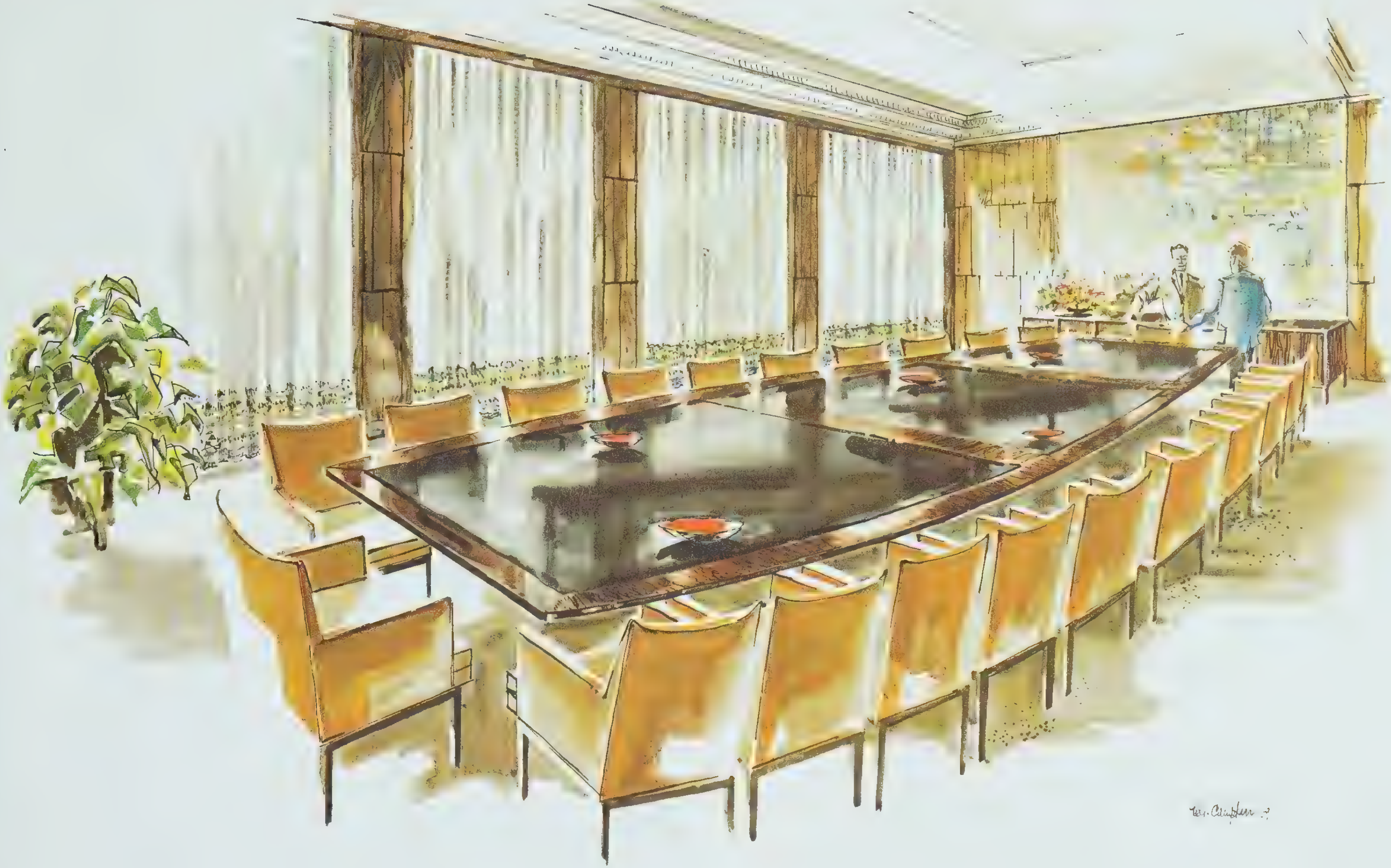
Through the use of recessed lighting and acoustically treated ceilings, the main office areas have been made pleasant and practical work places for large groups of people. Linoleum tiled floors, uniform steel furnishings, drop-louvre fluorescent lighting fixtures, and reversible windows all contribute to the ease—and reduce the cost —of maintaining the building.

Considerable attention was paid to air conditioning in the new building; the local climate called for something more than simply "summer air cooling." To maintain good working conditions all year round, the building had to be "weather conditioned." A zoned temperature and humidity control system keeps temperatures at a proper level in every part of the building at all times. An interesting part of the system is an "electrostatic precipitron," a device which filters air distributed in the building and removes about 80% of external impurities, including particles of dust. Among other benefits, it is expected to contribute to lower maintenance and cleaning costs.

The new Head Office offered solutions to long-standing problems of communication within the Company, in particular the problem of internal physical communication; in its most simple terms this can be thought of as the movement of people and messages from one area to another by the fastest route.

Considering people first, there was the need for fast vertical transportation. It has been amply proved that escalators are the best means of moving large numbers of people from floor to floor in buildings under six storeys high.

Executive office, South Wing, third floor.



Board Room, West Wing, third floor.

Escalators provide main means of vertical transportation

Because of this experience, escalators were chosen as the chief mode of transportation in the new building with its initial occupancy of eleven hundred people. The building is equipped with a set of two escalators serving all floors but the basement. These moving stairs are speedier than those commonly in use and, on them, it takes little more than sixty seconds to travel from the ground to the fifth floor. Two elevators have been installed as an auxiliary means of transport, one for passengers and the second largely for equipment and supplies.

The problem of moving people inside the new building is parallelled by another ''communications'' problem: that of moving the mails. The Great-West Life Mail department handles several million pieces of correspondence each year—thousands of inter-office memoranda and an even greater volume of mailings to policyholders. Speedy mail delivery was essential in the new Head Office and has been realized by the use of a modern conveyor system. The central mail room is located in the basement and is connected by a conveyor ''belt'' with small mail receiving-rooms on the floors above. The mail for each floor is placed on separate trays at a dispatching-station and its destination dialed on a selection panel; it is then automatically discharged at the receiving-station on the desired floor.

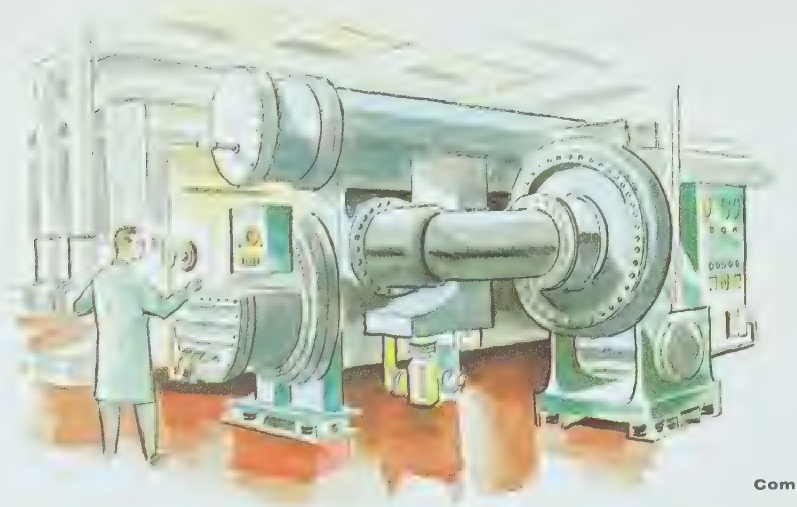
As with mail, so with records. The safe storage of company records—mostly the individual policy records of policyholders—was a matter of prime consideration in the planning of the new building. Prior to the move, the Company had been renting some 12,000 square feet of property outside its Head Office solely for the storage of records and supplies. Now, storage space is available in the specially constructed basement of the new Head Office; in addition, through the installation of a filing unit known as ''Compactus,'' it is possible to store records in half the space they formerly required. The new filing equipment eliminates the necessity of aisles of shelving, being in effect a giant steel accordion file or ''book'': a solid block when closed, it opens at the touch of a lever, making its own aisles which give access to rows of hidden shelving.

Telecommunication is also being used to speed up the business of communication in the new building. A ''telecord'' method of dictating letters by means of a special telephone—which has been in limited use in the Company for some years—has now been extended to serve more departments. A new installation is a teletype unit which provides a direct line to the main Winnipeg telegraph offices.

Another innovation is a public address system coyering the entire building through 345 speakers. First, it will be used for making important announcements to staff—with unusual advantages as part of the building's emergency control and fire prevention program—and, secondly, it will enable soft music to be piped into selected areas of the building during working hours —a feature of proven psychological value.

One of the advantages of the new building is the opportunity it provides for expanded use of electronic data-processing equipment, including the Company's IBM 650 unit. In latter years in its former buildings, Great-West Life had begun a steady conversion of tabulating and statistical operations from a mechanical ''punch card'' system to electronics—equipment which, although still relatively new to the business, appears to hold as yet inestimable advantages for life insurance companies. Its speed, accuracy, and work capacity is already beginning to revolutionize vast amounts of actuarial and accounting work. The operational value of electronics can be fully exploited as a result of the new building's improved facilities. The rear wing has been constructed with particular emphasis on the growing role of electronic equipment. All the floors have been reinforced to take the heavy machines, and, on the fifth floor where the equipment is concentrated, extra powerful air cooling is being made available.

Security control console, off main foyer



Compressor Room, North Wing, basement

This is necessary because of the IBM 650 which generates a considerable amount of heat while operating but will fail to function if the temperature climbs beyond a certain level.

An up-to-date security system is also part of the new building. It combines fire and burglar protection by means of electronic controls and watchman patrols. Core of the system is a "Control Console" which is manned at all times and provides immediate warning of an emergency anywhere in the building.

This has been but a brief review of the new Head Office building and the story behind its construction. There has been space to outline only the most important features but it is hoped that these have given the reader at least a nodding acquaintance with the building.

The new building means many things to many people. To the Company's policyholders and the public it will mean, in particular, increasingly efficient service from one of North America's major life insurance companies. To the staff it means congenial and interesting working conditions and is a symbol of the successes of the past and a challenge to future progress.

The new Head Office, born of a need created by the Company's growth and development, will lend strength to the Company's capacity for greater service in the future.

Directory of Departments

Fifth Floor

West Wing—Tabulating; Electronics. North Wing—Premium and Commission Accounting. South Wing—Statistical; Actuarial General; External Auditors; Accounting; Internal Audit.

Fourth Floor

West Wing—Individual A & H; Underwriting; Underwriting Index; Underwriting Service; Reinsurance; Medical; Policy Issue; Research. North Wing—Agency; Translation. South Wing—Policy Changes; Policy Values & Dividends; Titles; Mortgage.

Third Floor

West Wing—Group. North Wing—Group Claims; Group Superintendent; Public Relations; Legal; Policy Benefits; Library; Head Office Services; Transcribing. South Wing—Executive Offices; Secretary's General.

Second Floor

South Wing—Winnipeg Branch Agents; Group Sales Office.

First Floor

West Wing—Cafeteria; Dining-Conference Room; Building Office. North Wing—Bank of Montreal; Medical Rooms; Purchasing; Printing Admin.; Switch Board; Treasury; Securities; Expense Accounting. South Wing—Staff Lounges; Staff Club Office; Personnel; Planning; Branch Collection Office; Winnipeg Group Claims; Winnipeg Mortgage Office.

Basement

West Wing—Kitchen; Boiler Room; Electrical Services; Machine Maintenance. North Wing—Compressor Rooms; Storage; Machine Room. South Wing—Supply Section; Mail Department; Company Records; Application Files; Duplicating and Photostat.

Statistics

Site
Area: 8 acres; approximately 665 ft. frontage on Osborne Street North; occupies block bounded on east by Osborne Street, north by Brydges Avenue, west by Colony Street, and south by Mostyn Place.

Dimensions
453-foot frontage on Osborne Street; depth from main entrance to rear of west wing, 283 ft. Overall height, 99 ft., from entrance base to penthouse roof. Usable floor space, 219,000 sq. ft.

Foundation
40,000 cu. yds. excavated for foundation, which rests on 198 concrete-filled piles resting on bedrock, averaging 56 ft. below surface. Special water-repellent sealing in foundation. 7,000 cu. yds. of concrete used.

Steel
Approximately 1,800 tons of structural steel in framework; specially smelted steel to permit column-free areas 50 feet wide.

Floors
Pre-cast concrete slab floors. Each slab 16″ x 20 ft., averaging 1,200 pounds.

Exterior
Basic material is Tyndall limestone from Manitoba quarries (1,300 tons used). Lower front facade is Minnesota granite.

Windows
675 double-glazed reversible windows.

Electrical System
172 miles of wire. Cellular flooring provides 1,100 high tension outlets and 875 low tension outlets. Control panel checks operating status of 41 remote controlled motors, 93 fencing elements, and 13 recording fencing elements. Public address system has 345 speakers.

Lighting
Fluorescent lighting system in flush drop-louvre units contains 11,300 lamps.

Air Conditioning
Zoned temperature and humidity control. Electrostatic precipitron cleans 80% of impurities from air distributed in building.

Heating
Building heated by three 125 hp. capacity boilers. Hot water supplied by three 630 gal. copper alloy tanks.

1911—The Original Building, 177 Lombard Avenue

1923—Four-Storey Addition

1911-1959

In the spring of 1911, the Great-West Life Head Office staff moved into a new building at 177 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg. It was the first Head Office building the Company had owned—during the years since 1892 when it commenced business it had occupied rented quarters in six downtown locations. For forty-eight years, the Lombard Avenue building has remained the Head Office. As the Company grew, facilities were expanded: first, with the addition of four storeys to 177 Lombard in 1923 and subsequently by the acquisition of the Annex at 185 Lombard Ave., and the Main Street building at 191 Lombard Ave.

These years have witnessed many changes in the Company. For example, in 1911, Great-West Life served 40,000 policyholders; in 1959, over 800,000. In 1911, business in force reached $68 million; in 1959, over $4 billion. During 1911, the Company paid $421,000 in benefits to policyholders and beneficiaries; the corresponding figure for 1958 was $71,000,000.

1946—The Three Buildings on Lombard Avenue

1959—The New Head Office Building at 60 Osborne Street North.

Chronology of Construction

Architects' design approved	May 16, 1956
Contract let	March 15, 1957
First sod turned	March 28, 1957
Datestone laid	May 15, 1958
Building occupied	May 19, 1959
Building dedicated	June 8, 1959

Associated Architects:

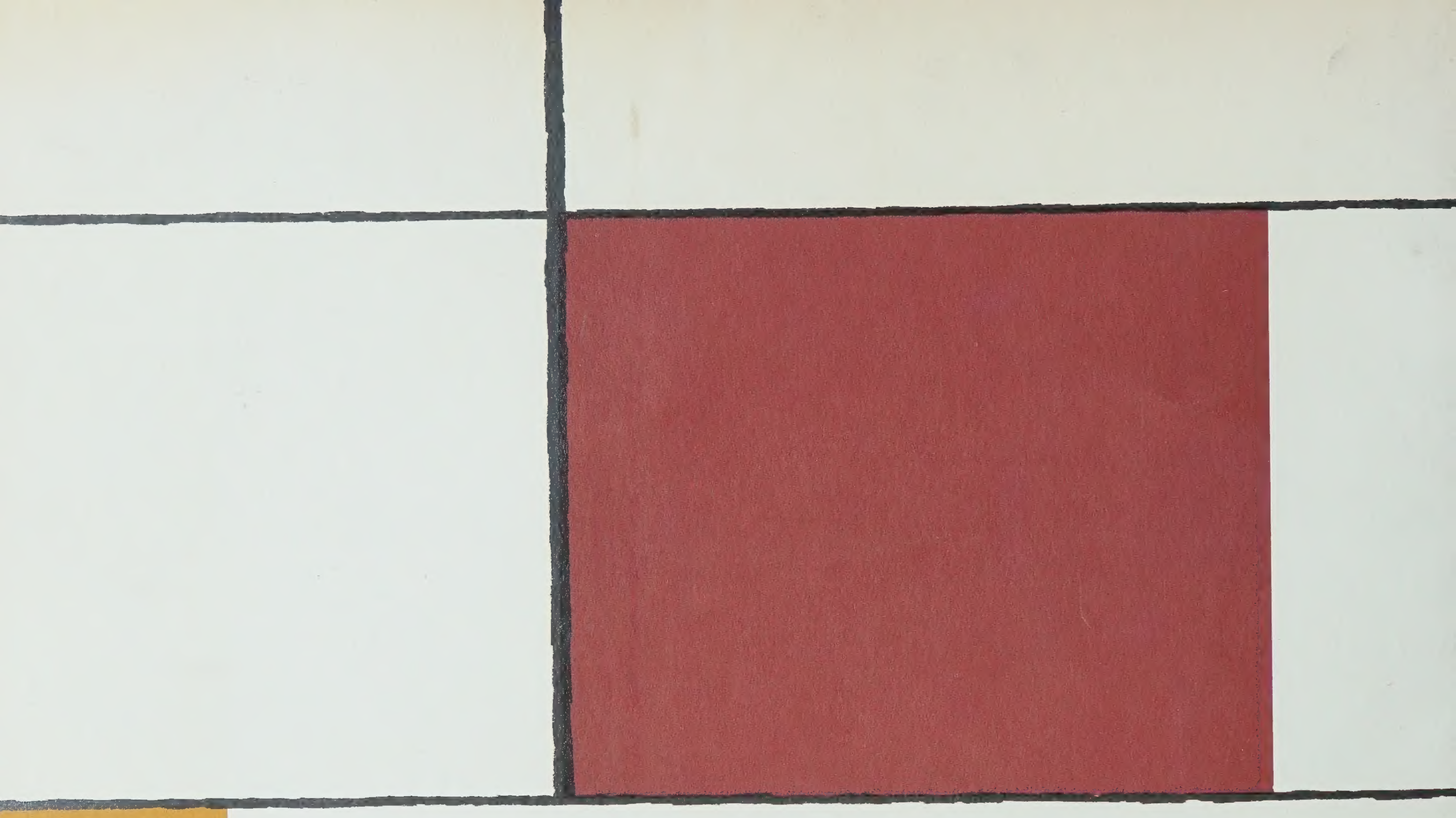
MARANI & MORRIS, TORONTO
MOODY, MOORE & PARTNERS, WINNIPEG

Consulting Engineers:

WALLACE-CARRUTHERS & ASSOCIATES LTD.,TORONTO
H. H. ANGUS & ASSOCIATES LTD., TORONTO

General Contractor:

G. A. BAERT CONSTRUCTION CO. LTD., WINNIPEG



The Great-West Life Assurance Company

60 Osborne St., North, WINNIPEG, CANADA

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